



# Kids Deploy Too!

MilitaryKidsConnect.org

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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## **SAFETY**

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### **What if you receive information that indicates a child may be at risk for suicide?**

Periodic live moderation is intended to recognize such types of behavior. An escalation process is in place to contact the child who is at risk and provide crisis resources. Of course the website cannot prevent suicides and also relies on the child's offline support network to recognize signs that indicate the child is at risk.

### **How do you verify that a parent approves their child to use the message boards?**

Children are required to provide their parent's email to get approval to use the message boards. Parents receive an email request for approval for the child to use the message board. If a parent does not approve, the child cannot access the message board. The terms of use are provided to the parent describing what is involved in providing consent.

### **What if inappropriate content is shared by children?**

If children on the message board feel content is inappropriate, they can flag that content. Flagged content is reviewed by moderators and potentially removed. Periodic live moderation of all messages will also remove inappropriate content.

### **How is user privacy protected?**

MilitaryKidsConnect.org complies with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). User registration is anonymous and no personal identification information is collected. In order to participate in message boards, users must have parental approval (verified through email). The message boards are moderated and any inappropriate or suspicious posts are removed and sent to appropriate authorities when needed.

### **Do you collect information about users?**

No. MilitaryKidsConnect.org complies with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). User registration is anonymous and no personal identification information is collected. In order to participate in message boards, users must have parental approval (verified through email). The message boards are moderated and any inappropriate or suspicious posts are removed and sent to appropriate authorities when needed.

### **How are users protected from online predators or cyberbullies?**

Users are protected through moderation of message boards and anonymous registration. In order to participate in message boards, users must have parental approval (verified through email). Message boards are moderated and any predatory or bullying content is removed and the offending user is banned from the website.

Users are not required to register to enjoy most of the features on the site. User registration is required in order to participate in message boards and to save items to "My Stuff". User registration is anonymous and no personal identification information is

required. Because the site does not collect any personal identification information, predators or cyberbullies cannot gain such information by exploiting user accounts.

### **Can I be banned from the website?**

Yes, you can be banned from the website for not following the message board rules. These rules can be accessed by clicking on "Message Board Rules" on the top right of the message board page. In most cases, you will be given a warning the first time you break a rule but after that it is likely you will be banned. You can also be banned if you exhibit predatory or cyberbullying behavior.

### **Will other kids know who I am?**

No personal information is stored on the website. Any user of the message board will know your username. We use filters and moderators to protect you from revealing personal information that would identify you.

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## **TECHNICAL**

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### **Do I need an account to use the site?**

Users are not required to register to enjoy most of the features on MilitaryKidsConnect.org.org. User registration is required in order to participate in message boards and to save items to "My Stuff". User registration is anonymous and no personal identification information is required.

### **How do I set up my MilitaryKidsConnect.org account?**

Click on the "Sign Up" link located on the top right corner and follow the instructions.

### **Do I have to use a particular browser?**

This site works optimally with Internet Explorer 9, Firefox 3.6+ and Chrome.

### **Do I need special software to watch videos or play games?**

You need the latest Flash plug-in on your computer to watch videos. If you do not have Flash you will be prompted to download it. You may have difficulty viewing videos over slow Internet connections, such as dial-up or low-bandwidth wireless connections. If you are using Norton Personal Firewall or Norton Internet Security, you may need to adjust your settings at the Norton ad-blocking settings adjustment page.

### **Are your pages printer-friendly?**

Not all pages are printer-friendly. Pages that are printer-friendly include the instructions for projects, scrapbook pages, resource lists and some game images.

### **I've forgotten my MilitaryKidsConnect.org password. What do I do?**

Click on the "Sign In" button located on the top right corner. Then click on the "Lost your password?" link and follow the simple instructions to reset your password.

## **How do I get access to the message board?**

Only kids ages 9-17 can access the message board and parental approval is required. There are two ways you can get parental approval. When you register your account you will be prompted for your parent's email address. If you decide not to ask for parental approval during the registration process you will be prompted for your parent's email when you go to the message board for the first time. In both cases, your parent's email address will be used only once, to send an email to your parent requesting approval, and is not stored by MilitaryKidsConnect.org. If your parent does not approve, you will not be able to access the message board.

## **How will I know when I am approved to use the message board?**

You will receive a message in your personal mailbox on the website after your parent approves or disapproves your access. Your personal mailbox is under the "My Stuff" link on the top menu bar.

## **I'm still having technical problems. Who do I contact?**

If you are still having technical problems, please contact us using the "Contact Us" link on the bottom menu bar. Note that we only check the "Contact Us" account periodically so an immediate response is not likely.

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## **GENERAL**

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### **What is MilitaryKidsConnect.org?**

MilitaryKidsConnect.org (MKC) is an online resource for military children (ages 6-17) coping with a parent or caregiver's deployment and with the challenges unique to being a military kid. MilitaryKidsConnect.org provides age-appropriate interactive activities, personal stories, and a place for military kids to share their views and experiences. These tools safely help children, parents, and educators navigate the wide range of practical and emotional challenges facing military kids.

### **Who is Stampy?**

Stampy the passport stamp is your guide through MilitaryKidsConnect.org. A world traveler himself, Stampy is always ready for adventure and to help you explore new places.

### **How is MilitaryKidsConnect.org different from other websites for kids?**

MilitaryKidsConnect.org is different from other websites for kids in several ways:

1. MilitaryKidsConnect.org was developed by psychologists.
2. MilitaryKidsConnect.org is a Department of Defense website.
3. MilitaryKidsConnect.org is intended for military children.
4. MilitaryKidsConnect.org has Stampy!

### **Who developed MilitaryKidsConnect.org?**

MilitaryKidsConnect.org was developed by two psychologists at the National Center for Telehealth & Technology: Kelly A. Blasko, Ph.D. and Pam Murphy, Psy.D. Dr. Blasko is

a licensed counseling psychologist who has specialized in translating psychological requirements and interventions into technology-based solutions. Dr. Blasko completed her Ph.D. at The Pennsylvania State University and her M.A. in Marriage and Family Therapy from the Appalachian State University. Dr. Murphy is a clinical psychologist who has specialized in working with children in all settings. Dr. Murphy received her doctorate from Baylor University.

### **What is the value to users of MilitaryKidsConnect.org?**

MilitaryKidsConnect.org is a website specifically designed to enhance the resilience of military children of all ages throughout the deployment cycle. The tween and teen message boards connect military kids and enable opportunities for peer support; interactive maps and online scrapbooks encourage parent-child interaction; documentary-style videos capture the experience of military youth; instructional vignettes provide guidance as youth are faced with age-specific dilemmas; and educational games help to distract users from everyday pressures. The website's overarching design is intended to promote learning through skills development. For example, users accumulate "passport stamps" as they complete activities.

### **Why was MilitaryKidsConnect.org created?**

MilitaryKidsConnect.org was developed when a gap was found in websites for military kids whose parent or caregiver was deployed. Development began in October 2010. Presidential Study Directive-9 (PSD-9), Strengthening Our Military Families: Meeting America's Commitment (January 2011) called for a Government-wide effort to "enhance the well-being and psychological health of the military family." Deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan have affected nearly two million military children. The key finding of a 2010 RAND study suggested military youth experience distress resulting in anxiety symptoms and emotional difficulties before, during and after a parent's deployment. Despite the accessibility and popularity of the Internet among children, there was no website specifically designed to support children whose caregivers deploy. MilitaryKidsConnect.org was designed to fill this gap.

### **Can I get a speaker or promotional materials for my event?**

To arrange for a speaker or promotional materials from MilitaryKidsConnect.org, please contact us using the "Contact Us" link on the bottom menu bar.